



FEMA

Disaster News

July 2, 2004

FEMA-1526-DR-WI-NR16

Contact:

FEMA Doug Welty 608-277-3862

WEM Lori Getter 608-242-3239

SBA Frank Adinolfi 404-347-3771

NOTE TO EDITOR:

You can help disaster victims by announcing or publishing the toll-free application number, 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or TTY 1-800-462-7585, as often as possible.

ADDITIONAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE DISASTER ASSISTANCE

MADISON, WI — Disaster assistance has been made available to additional Wisconsin counties to help residents and local governments recover from the effects of recent severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, according to officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Federal Coordinating Officer Ron Sherman said the following counties were added to the list of eligible jurisdictions for Individual Assistance to aid residents and business owners based on a review of damage data gathered by federal and state disaster recovery officials: Adams, Brown, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dane, Eau Claire, Grant, Green, Green Lake, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, LaCrosse, Lafayette, Marathon, Marquette, Milwaukee, Monroe, Outagamie, Portage, Racine, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Shawano, Sheboygan, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara and Wood Counties. Adams, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, Marquette, and Monroe Counties have been added for Public Assistance to help local governments and certain qualifying non-profits.

The counties designated eligible on June 18 include Columbia, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Kenosha, Ozaukee and Winnebago for Individual Assistance, and Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green Lake, Kenosha, Ozaukee, Vernon, and Winnebago for Public Assistance.

“We remain committed to ensuring that every qualified family and business receives the help they need and that vital community facilities are restored to full service as quickly as possible,” Sherman said.

Residents and business owners are eligible to apply for a wide range of state and federal disaster assistance programs under the major disaster declaration issued by President Bush. The aid can include funding for temporary disaster housing assistance, U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest disaster loans for individuals and business owners to repair or replace real or personal property and housing repair; replacement grants to help meet serious disaster-related needs and expenses not covered by insurance or other assistance programs; and disaster unemployment assistance.

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Affected residents and business owners may apply for assistance immediately by calling the toll-free registration number, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362), 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday**, until further notice. Those with a speech or hearing impairment may call TTY **1-800-462-7585**. The phone lines will be operating Monday, July 5th.

Callers are advised to have the following information available to help speed up the application process:

- Your current phone number;
- Your Social Security number, if available;
- A general list of damages and losses you suffered;
- If insured, your insurance policy number, or the agent's and company name;
- General financial information; and
- Bank account code if you wish to speed up your assistance with direct deposit.

FEMA disaster assistance covers basic needs only and will not normally compensate you for your entire loss. If you have insurance, the government may help pay for basic needs not covered under your insurance policy. Residents should contact their insurance agent first, then call FEMA to apply in case you have any essential needs not met by your insurance policy. Some disaster aid does not have to be paid back, while other help may come in the form of loans. The FEMA representative will explain the details to you when you call.

In addition, for those counties eligible for Public Assistance, funding will be available to affected local governments and certain qualifying non-profit organizations to pay for the approved costs for debris removal, emergency services related to the disaster, and repairing or replacing damaged public facilities, such as roads, buildings and utilities. Under the Public Assistance Program, applicants with eligible damage costs can receive grants that are 75% funded by FEMA and 12.5% funded by the State of Wisconsin with the remaining costs the applicant's share. Federal funds are also available for cost sharing of expenses for approved projects that can reduce future disaster risk.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INFORMATION

When disaster strikes, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers a number of disaster assistance programs and coordinates the efforts of many other federal agencies that provide services to help people through the recovery process. The types of assistance that are available follow.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Programs

INDIVIDUALS and HOUSEHOLDS PROGRAM: Housing assistance to individuals and families whose permanent homes were damaged or destroyed by the disaster. Types of aid include grants for temporary rental housing; essential repairs needed to make a residence safe, sanitary and functional; and, to meet serious disaster-related needs and expenses not covered by insurance or other programs, such as medical, dental, funeral, personal property, transportation and other FEMA-approved expenses.

DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE: Weekly benefits to individuals out of work due to the disaster, including self-employed persons, farm owners and others not usually covered under regular unemployment insurance.

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U.S. Small Business Administration Programs

HOME/PERSONAL PROPERTY DISASTER LOANS: Disaster loans to homeowners and renters for restoring or replacing underinsured or uninsured disaster-damaged real and personal property. (Available in declared counties.)

BUSINESS DISASTER LOANS: Disaster loans to repair or replace destroyed or damaged business facilities, inventory, machinery, equipment, etc. not covered by insurance. (Available to large and small businesses in declared counties.) Loans also may be available to small businesses for working capital to assist them during the disaster recovery period. (Available in declared and contiguous counties.)

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages Citizen Corps, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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